

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE  
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



Taken at Jui Junction. Photo Credit: Richard Sylvah.

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office as at:**

Thursday, 6 October 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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# Office of the President

Wednesday, 5 October 2011

## PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 5 October 2011



**GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE**

**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
STATE HOUSE  
TOWER HILL  
FREETOW**

### PRESS RELEASE

#### INVESTIGATION REPORTS ON THE DISTURBANCES IN KONO AND BO

IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT DISTURBANCES OCCURRED IN KONO ON 3RD SEPTEMBER 2011 AND IN BO CITY ON 9TH SEPTEMBER 2011 WHICH UNDERMINED THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF THE STATE. IN THE CASE OF KONO, HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT DIRECTED THE POLICE TO CONDUCT A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT IN WHICH THE ENTOURAGE OF THE MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS WAS ATTACKED LEADING TO SKIRMISHES AND THE DISCHARGE OF GUN SHOTS BY THE MINISTER'S SECURITY GUARDS. CONCERNING THE DISTURBANCES IN BO, HIS EXCELLENCY CONSTITUTED A BROAD-BASED INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION PANEL TO LOOK INTO THE STONING OF THE SLPP PRESIDENTIAL FLAGBEARER, THE BURNING DOWN OF BUILDINGS, AND THE SHOOTING AND INJURIES SUSTAINED BY SEVERAL PERSONS.

THE POLICE HAVE CONCLUDED THEIR INVESTIGATIONS ON THE KONO INCIDENT, AND SUBMITTED A REPORT TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT ON 30TH SEPTEMBER 2011. THE EVIDENCE ADDUCED INDICATES THAT THE ATTACK WAS NOT SPONTANEOUS BUT HAD BEEN PRE-PLANNED BY 12 UNSCRUPULOUS PERSONS BENT ON DISRUPTING LAW AND ORDER. THE REPORT HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND THE PROSECUTION OF THESE SUSPECTS FOR SEVERAL OFFENCES WILL COMMENCE SHORTLY.

IN THE CASE OF THE INCIDENT IN BO, THE INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION PANEL CHAIRED BY MR KELVIN LEWIS OF THE SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS PRESENTED ITS REPORT TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT ON 30TH SEPTEMBER 2011. GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PANEL AND ASSURES THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT

THEY WILL BE FULLY IMPLEMENTED. OVER 40 PERSONS WILL SOON BE CHARGED TO COURT TO THE INTENT THAT THE FULL FORCE OF THE LAW WILL BE BROUGHT TO BEAR.

IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT IN SPITE OF STRENUOUS EFFORTS ON THE PART OF GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY PREVAIL WITHIN A TRULY DEMOCRATIC ENVIRONMENT, SOME ILL-MOTIVATED PERSONS CONTINUE TO STOKE UP THE FLAMES OF CHAOS AND ANARCHY THEREBY EXPOSING PEACEFUL CITIZENS TO HARM AND DANGER. ONCE AGAIN, GOVERNMENT STRONGLY CONDEMNS VIOLENCE IN ALL ITS FORMS, AND REAFFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO TAKE EVERY NECESSARY STEP TO GUARANTEE THAT OUR HARD WON PEACE IS MAINTAINED. GOVERNMENT ALSO ASSURES THE ENTIRE NATION THAT THE LIVES AND PROPERTIES OF ALL CITIZENS WILL BE PROTECTED.

GOVERNMENT STRONGLY APPEALS TO ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO PROVIDE RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH MODERN DEMOCRATIC BEST PRACTICE, FAILING WHICH IT WILL HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO USE THE PROVISIONS OF SIERRA LEONE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW TO ENSURE THAT THE RULE OF LAW REIGNS SUPREME.

IN CONCLUSION, GOVERNMENT WISHES TO THANK THE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, INDIVIDUALS AND GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES THAT CONSTITUTED THE PANEL FOR THEIR TIMELY SUBMISSION OF A GOOD REPORT. THEY ARE ASSURED THAT THEIR PATRIOTIC RESPONSE TO THE CALL OF NATIONAL DUTY IS DEEPLY APPRECIATED.

IT BEHOVES US ALL TO STRIVE FOR UNITY, FREEDOM AND JUSTICE IN OUR BELOVED COUNTRY.  
END

STATE HOUSE  
FREETOWN

5TH OCTOBER 2011

## AI Congratulates Salone Human Rights Commitment

*...as Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome*

A Press Release from Amnesty International (AI) says the organisation has congratulated Sierra Leone for its commitment to recommendations on internationally recognized human rights. AI welcomes the acceptance in principle by the Sierra Leone Government, for a moratorium on the Death Penalty and the Government's stated commitment to improve on healthcare in connection with birth delivery and to address other causes of Maternal Mortality. This is against the backdrop of the adoption of the Universal Periodic Review outcome on Sierra Leone by the United Nations backed international Human Rights Council.

Thirteen states raised the issue of the death penalty during the review of Sierra Leone, calling for a moratorium on executions, abolition of the death penalty, and ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. "Amnesty International congratulates Sierra Leone on accepting these recommendations in principle and urges

it to immediately take all necessary steps to abolish the death penalty in national legislation and to commute existing death sentences to terms of imprisonment" said Brima Sheriff, director of Amnesty International Sierra Leone. "Amnesty International also welcomes Sierra Leone's commitment to improve healthcare in connection with birth delivery and to address other causes of maternal mortality and is pleased to note that Sierra Leone is reviewing maternity healthcare policies and improving access to confidential family planning and sexual health and reproductive services."

Amnesty International notes important reforms in this area, including a free healthcare policy covering pregnancy and childbirth, but it urges Sierra Leone to ensure that gaps in monitoring and accountability do not undermine the success of these reforms.

Amnesty International recently published a report highlighting continuing challenges faced by pregnant women and girls in Sierra Leone. Women and girls report that drugs and other essential medical supplies are often not available at

health facilities, or they are charged for medicines and care that are supposed to be free. Amnesty International's research also reveals serious deficiencies in accountability across critical areas of the health system.

Amnesty International calls on Sierra Leone to reinforce transparency and accountability by monitoring and investigating shortcomings in the national health systems, and to respond robustly to allegations of corruption and systematic malpractice. The organization urges Sierra Leone to make grievance redress mechanisms available within the health systems and inform patients about their right to redress. Sierra Leone must also commit to conducting a periodic assessment of progress using "UN process indicators" to monitor the availability, utilization and quality of emergency obstetric care.

The Amnesty International release ended by urging Sierra Leone's prompt implementation of the many recommendations on the elimination, prohibition and criminalization of female genital mutilation.

Global Times  
Thursday, 6 October 2011

# AG Explains Sierra Leone's Human Rights Record

Sierra Leone recently went through her first review at the 11th Session of the Universal Periodic Review Session in Geneva. The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN member states once every four years. Member states directly examine each other on their human rights record. The UPR is a state driven process, under the auspices of the United Nations Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each state to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfill their human rights obligations. As one of the main features of the council, the UPR is designed to ensure equal treatment for every country being reviewed.

Sierra Leone government's delegation was led by Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Frank Kargbo. Commissioners of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone participated in the UPR of the Human Rights Council representing National Human Rights Institutions as observers. The review is based on the reports earlier submitted by the Government of Sierra

Leone, the civil society organizations, the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone and the United Nations Country Team.

During the session, a total of 42 countries including USA, UK, Morocco, Ghana, Turkey, Australia, Algeria, Uganda, Mexico, Nigeria, Australia, Algeria, Mexico and the Netherlands commented on Sierra Leone's presentation and offered useful suggestions and recommendations with a view to improving human rights in the country.

Among recommendations identified by members of the human rights council were the need for increased financial and technical support to the Human Rights Commission to be able to fully implement its mandate, abolition of death penalty and total elimination of female genital mutilation.

Council members commended government for the implementation of the Free Health Care Policy and Presidential apology to women, and the 30 percent quota for women in Parliament among others. Sierra Leone's report will be formally adopted at the working group session.

The UPR was created through the UN General Assem-

bly on 15th March 2006 by Resolution 60251, which established the Human Rights Council itself. It is a cooperative process which, by 2011, will have reviewed the human rights records of every country.



Justice Minister Frank Kargbo

## Plain Truth

Thursday, 6 October 2011

### President Koroma Alerts ICC Ahead Of 2012 Elections

In furtherance of efforts by government in bringing an end to the culture of impunity in Sierra Leone, President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma has on Sunday 2nd October 2011 resonated his unyielding commitments to alert the International Criminal Court for the continuous monitoring of the conduct of political leaders and their supporters as the country approaches the 2012 electioneering campaigns. The President was speaking during a thanksgiving service held at the Wesleyan Church Panlap Makeni, marking the fourth years of successful governance in office which coincided with his 58th birthday celebration for which he thanked God. He said there is no hiding place for perpetrators of political violence in the country and that the law will not stop at any point in prosecuting anybody found culpable of violence related offences, adding that democracy goes along by the will of the people ... not democracy by force. President Koroma reassured all that the talk of political and any other forms of violence will soon be a history saying that no country will develop without peace and tranquillity. On gains made by his administration within four years in office, President Koroma said there are evidence of changes recorded everywhere in Sierra Leone with improved governance structures, reiterating that his government has no political prisoner, no journalist jailed since assumed office. Speaking further on the fourth anniversary, the Head State described the occasion as a great moment for the country saying; "It was through the grace of God will and blessings that he became President of Sierra Leone and that it is also by the grace of God that he is able work for his people". He said Sierra Leone has been recognised as the top most reformed nation in the world. The

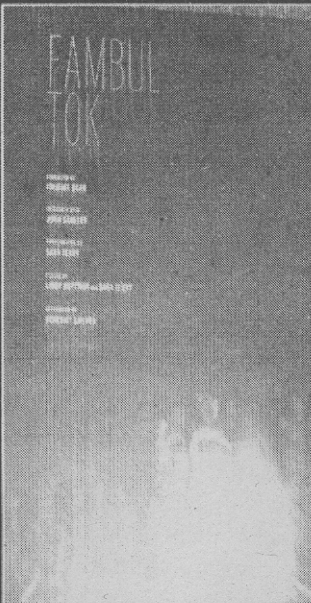
host Paramount Chief, Massa Yeli Tham of Makari Gbanti chiefdom expressed delight for having the President in their midst which he said is an indication of the Head of State's love for his people. He said when President Koroma was born 58 years ago he was a blessing to just the Koroma family but has now become a blessing to the whole world and Sierra Leone in particular. PC Massa Yeli Tham implored President Koroma to continue with his good works in all fronts of governance and create more employment opportunities for youth. He prayed for God's guidance and direction of the leadership of President Koroma, while lauding government's efforts for the free health care policy, energy, infrastructural development of towns and cities, agriculture and food sufficiency, the fostering of inter-political party tolerance and peace in the country. In his scripture reading from Exodus Chapter 3, verse 7 to 12, the Attorney General and Minister of Justice Franklyn Kargbo said when God recognized that the people Egypt were suffering he sent Moses to redeem them from the bondage and took them to a better place. Reverend Moses Kanu in a sermon delivered to the congregation from Proverbs 29-2 with the theme; "when the righteous rule the people", said the behaviour and responses of the people of a country depends on the kind of leadership they have as he cited Joseph as a righteous leader and that when the wicked rule the people will suffer. He said even when President Koroma is busy rebuilding the country yet certain people are always crying him down, hence congratulated the Head of State to continue with the good policies he inherited from his predecessor, former president Alhaji Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

[Note: This story also appeared in today's New Storm.]

New Citizen  
Thursday, 6 October 2011

# Fambul Tok Book Launched

By John Mansaray



**By John Mansaray**

All Works of Life organization will today witness the official launching of the Fambul Tok book and screening of a documentary film on peace reconciliation activities, the organization is principally engaged in a ceremony to be held at the British Council Hall, Tower Hill in Freetown. Executive Director, Fambul Tok International,

*Continued on page 3*

## Fambul Tok Book & Film Launch Today

*From page 1*

Mr. John Caulker informed the New Citizen at his Roberts Street offices in Freetown that the book, which is produced with hardcover and colored was published by Umbrage editions 2011, serves as a companion volume to the film that shows significant events of how people in the most ravaged zones during the civil conflict in Sierra Leone, have realized and accepted each other through reconciliation campaigns by the national non-governmental organization, Fambul Tok International.

According to Mr. Caulker, the book contains voices of conflict resolution of some experts including Mr. Benedict Sannoh, formerly of the Human Rights Section of the United Nations Office in Sierra Leone,

Ishmael Beah, former child combatant, John Caulker of Fambul Tok, Libby Hoffman who has photographs and stories of a journalist, Sara Terry.

On the side of the Fambul Tok film, Mr. Caulker, disclosed that the eighty-two (82-minutes) film is directed by Sara Terry and produced by Emmy-award-winner Rory Kennedy.

The film depicts thrilling stories with powers of forgiveness and reconciliation.

John Caulker expressed optimism that today's book launching and film screening would provide the platform on which Sierra Leoneans, government and diplomats in the country would demonstrate their willingness and determination to build proper reconciliation in the communities.

He urged all to grab a copy of the Fambul Tok book now.



# The Atlantic

Wednesday, 5 October 2011

## In Liberia, Yearning for Return of Imprisoned Warlord Charles Taylor

By Robbie Corey-Boulet

Oct 5 2011, 9:56 AM ET [3](#)

*The man who plunged his country and Sierra Leone into war could play a major role in Liberia's political future -- and its hopes for peace -- even as he stands trial at a special UN-backed court*



Former Liberian President Charles Taylor awaits the start of the prosecution's closing arguments during his trial at the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone in February 2011. Taylor denies all 11 charges of instigating murder, rape, mutilation, sexual slavery and conscription of child soldiers during wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone in which more than 250,000 were killed.

BONG COUNTY, Liberia -- Not long after becoming president of Liberia in 1997, Charles Taylor established an extralegal security squad and placed it under the command of his son Chuckie, a 20-year-old with an interest in SWAT teams and a fondness for action movies. The Anti-Terrorist Unit, composed of some of Taylor's most experienced fighters from the civil war that preceded his rise to power, quickly became notorious for its abuses against suspected rebels, ordinary civilians, and even its own inductees: the torture administered during "training" proved, in many cases, fatal. Residents of Gbatala, in central Liberia's Bong County, learned to avoid the hilltop ATU training facility just outside town. Those who strayed too close were known to disappear.

Taylor's ATU, like the man himself, often operated above the law. In the early 1980s, while serving in the government of former President Samuel Doe, he allegedly embezzled nearly \$1 million, sending the money to a U.S. bank account. Arrested in Massachusetts by U.S. deputy marshals, he fought extradition before escaping from a maximum security prison in 1985. He made his way to Libya, where he received revolutionary training from Muammar Qaddafi's government. On Christmas Eve, 1989, he led a group of about 100 rebels into Liberia to overthrow Doe, eventually igniting civil wars that lasted until 2003 and

killed more than 250,000 people. Replete with widespread rape, civilian massacres, and the deployment of child soldiers, the conflict transformed Liberia -- once a haven of African stability -- into the very epitome of lawlessness.

But the law has caught up with Taylor. In 2006, newly elected President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf requested that Taylor -- who had sought asylum in Nigeria after stepping down in 2003 -- be sent back to Liberia. She immediately transferred him to the UN, which in turn transferred him to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, a hybrid international tribunal that indicted Taylor for his alleged role in that neighboring country's similarly horrific civil war. Prosecutors have accused him of, among other things, backing Sierra Leone's brutal Revolutionary United Front rebels and sending Liberian forces to fight there.

The trial has helped keep Taylor at the forefront of Liberia's political discourse even from The Hague. In proceedings that spanned three years, judges heard testimony from Mia Farrow and Naomi Campbell on his alleged trafficking in blood diamonds; victims who described how they were raped and maimed; and a former death squad commander who accused Taylor of ordering his troops to engage in cannibalism. Court sources told me a verdict is expected in late October, though no announcement has been made.

Alpha Sesay, who monitored the trial for the Open Society Justice Initiative, said the verdict "could go either way," partly because of the complicated nature of the charges. Because Taylor is on trial for charges related to the conflict in Sierra Leone, not Liberia, it is potentially more difficult to link him to crimes on the ground. Prosecutors say they've done that; the defense says the evidence is insufficient.

The timing could be awkward. Liberia is gearing up for a national election on October 11 that some observers predict will be close, resulting in a presidential runoff in early November. This means the verdict could revive discussion of the war years at the precise time that candidates here -- many of whom have been involved in Liberian politics for decades -- are trying to distance themselves from their wartime records. But Taylor's remaining supporters are holding out hope that, in the event of an acquittal, the former president could eventually come home and turn Liberian politics upside down, rendering the election meaningless.

These days, the Anti-Terrorist Unit facility outside Gbatata sits abandoned, disturbed only by the hammer-wielding boys who crush rocks into gravel along the road leading up to it. More than a dozen squat brick buildings are largely shrouded in overgrowth. Many have faded to an ashen gray, though a few retain their original paint: dark green camouflage accented with orange and pink.

In town, not far from a road sign that reads "The war is over," Rachel McCarthy, 28, leans against a wall nursing her baby son. Although Liberia is now at peace, McCarthy said she preferred the Taylor years -- in large part because staple foods, mainly rice, were less expensive. "Yes, there was war, but we had food. Today, although we're free now, and we have peace, it's not easy," she said.

Asked how she would react to an acquittal, McCarthy said, "I will be too happy. I want for Mr. Taylor to come back. He's got more support here. As I speak, I will vote for him. He's a leader who knows leadership. He knows how to make things easy."

Such views are common in Bong County, which has long been a Taylor stronghold (he formed an unofficial government there in 1991). In the county capital, Gbarnga, Thomas Harris, a 47-year-old ex-combatant who fought for Taylor from 1990 to 2003, said Taylor's support would be readily apparent if he returned to Liberia, and even more so if he returned to politics. "People would walk from here, from all over Liberia, to go to Robertsfield to greet him," he said, referring to the airport. "They would walk from all over! Liberia would shake. And if he runs, he will win."

Harris, known as General Smile during the wars ("When I'm talking you think I'm playing, but I'm serious"), continued, "You know why people like Taylor? Because he was fighting a war but he was still

feeding people day and night. Day and night. And you remember that election slogan in 1997 -- 'He killed my ma, he killed my pa, I'll vote for him'? Why do you think that was? It was because he was feeding the people."

Taylor's popularity has long puzzled Liberia watchers. Reporting on the 1997 elections, in which Taylor received 75 percent of the vote, *The Washington Post* led their story, "Liberia has chosen a strange way to end -- if it is ended -- the seven-year civil war that has shredded their 150-year-old West African country." The general consensus is that Liberians believed Taylor would only stop fighting if he won, and that's why they voted him in.

Liberian journalist Gabriel Williams, in his 2006 book *Liberia: The Heart of Darkness*, argues that many voters actually saw Taylor as preferable to the political establishment, which has cemented a reputation for corruption and bickering. "Besides electing Taylor as a way of bringing the war to an end, the Liberian people were seen to have voted the way they did simply to show that they were just sick of the low dealings of the politicians," he wrote.

It is difficult to assess just how much support Taylor retains here, though Alain Werner, a Swiss lawyer who worked on Taylor's prosecution from 2006 to 2008, told me he thinks that Taylor loyalists make up an outspoken minority -- and not a majority -- of the population. Speaking with Liberians, he said, "You can have the impression that, 'Oh my god he still has a lot of support.' I don't know that that's true. It's just a matter of who is vocal."

Thomas Juaclomie, 52, who runs a construction materials store on Broad Street in Gbarnga, predicted that the return of Taylor would bring instability to a country teeming with unemployed former fighters. "We don't want him to come to Liberia, because once he's free, those children, those boys, will be giving us trouble again," Juaclomie said. "Those boys are here. He will not shut up his mouth. He will be in front of those boys and, continually, we will have trouble in the country."

Taylor's lead defense counsel Courtenay Griffiths claimed, in an interview over the phone, that Taylor remains "extremely popular" in Liberia, adding that this suggests he is innocent. "Taylor is being demonized as this dictator -- indeed, cannibal -- who has terrorized not only the people of Sierra Leone but also the people of Liberia," Griffiths said. "How does one square that with his continued popularity?"

"If Taylor would return to Liberia tomorrow it's likely that he could win a presidential election," Griffiths said. "The question remains: Would this be acceptable to Washington and London given their efforts to remove him from the region?"

Taylor's defense has argued repeatedly that his trial has nothing to do with his actual crimes and everything to do with geopolitics. Recently, Griffiths has cited a Wikileaks cable released in December, as the trial was winding down. "The best we can do for Liberia is to see to it that Taylor is put away for a long time," reads the cable from the embassy in Monrovia, dated March 2009. "All legal options should be studied to ensure Taylor cannot return to destabilize Liberia." These options included, according to the cable, "building a case in the United States against Taylor for financial crimes" or "applying the new law criminalizing child soldiers or terrorism statutes."

For Taylor's supporters, the cable affirmed their suspicions of U.S. designs on Liberia. "America is involved in regime change," said Sando Johnson, the 43-year-old official Taylor "family spokesman" who served as a political officer for him from 1990 to 2003, including a stint as majority leader in the House of Representatives.

"The Liberian people are convinced that Mr. Taylor is indeed a charismatic leader," Johnson said. "They are convinced that he was not involved in Sierra Leone. And they are convinced that he is going to walk out of there a free man. They have drawn a conclusion that Mr. Taylor cannot be found guilty, unless

America decides to twist it." He added, "If Mr. Taylor had been arrested for crimes committed in Liberia, then it may have some logic. But Mr. Taylor did not go to Sierra Leone."

Liberia so far has not seen any trials for war crimes or for crimes against humanity. One problem with pursuing prosecutions is the sheer number of people who could be implicated. In 2009, the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its final report recommending, among other things, that 49 people be barred from any political activity for 30 years because of their alleged associations with warring factions. Among them was Johnson-Sirleaf, the sitting president, who sent money to Taylor early on (she has since apologized, saying she did so "to challenge the brutality" of Doe's "dictatorship"). Unsurprisingly, Liberia has taken few steps to implement the recommendations (the Supreme Court has deemed the political bans unconstitutional).

Johnson, the family spokesman, touched on this problem when asked about the possibility of trying Taylor in connection with the Liberian conflict. "If you want to try him because of the war, then you must try all political stakeholders in Liberia," he said. "There are a lot of warlords here. There are a lot of boys around. So he is not the only one."

When he launched his assault on Doe's government in 1989, Taylor was accompanied by a senior commander named Prince Johnson. But by the time rebels reached Monrovia the following year, the two men had split, with Johnson forming the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia. Johnson came to control most of the capital while Taylor held most of the rest of the country. On September 9, 1990, Johnson captured Doe and oversaw his execution, which he recorded on videotape. The footage can still be purchased on the streets of downtown Monrovia. As Doe pleads for his life, rebels cut off his ear while Johnson sips a Budweiser. "I cut off his ears and made him eat them," Johnson later boasted.

The former warlord now lives in a two-story, tan-and-red house in Paynesville, on the outskirts of Monrovia and not far from Taylor's old mansion. He became a senator here in 2005, running a campaign the International Crisis Group has described as "incongruously based on his wartime record and security credentials," and is now running for president on the National Union for Democratic Progress ticket. He receives visitors to his compound in a large palaver hut outfitted with the trappings of candidacy: bodyguards, aides, cell phones that don't stop ringing.

Johnson insists that Taylor's enduring popularity is widespread. "He still has maximum support in Liberia," Johnson said in an interview, laughing a little. "I don't know what kind of power he has to get that support even in absentia."

But Johnson is not worried that Taylor will harm his chances in the October 11 election -- to the contrary, he says it will help. "[Taylor's] popularity does not in any way fear me," he said. "I trained all of his men as special forces commander. Those are my boys. With Taylor in prison, they are all with me."

Johnson, like General Smile, believes all of Liberia would welcome Taylor's return. "Liberians will be happy," Johnson said. "We don't want our former president to be in jail for any reason. We would be glad to see him back."

He even said there might be room for Taylor in a Prince Johnson administration. "If Taylor is let off the hook by the international community, it means he has committed no crime," he said. "As a former president, he could be an adviser." Asked which portfolio Taylor might receive, Johnson suggested foreign affairs.

*Reporting contributed by Stephen S. Binda, a journalist for Liberia's Daily Observer.*

## Public Agenda (Ghana)

Monday, 3 October 2011

### **Don't Take the Rule of Law for Granted**

Nana Poku

Ghanaian leaders and politicians have been exhorted to protect and guard jealously the democracy the country is enjoying by adhering to the principle of rule of Law.

The advice was given by Her Excellency Prof. Akua Kuenyehia, formerly Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Ghana, Legon and now an Eminent Judge at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, The Netherlands.

Professor Kuenyehia was giving a lecture at Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) on the topic, 'The International Criminal Court and its Role in Fighting against Impunity'. The occasion was the maiden Law Week celebration of the GIMPA School of Law which is barely a year old. The Theme for the celebration was "Championing the Rule of Law - The Bedrock of Constitutionalism and Democratic Governance".

She warned that Ghana was also susceptible to civil strife and war so long as there were unequal opportunities, disease, poverty, deprivation and political intolerance and the practice of the concept of "Winner Takes All".

"Gradually, our society is becoming the property for the few elite and the rich and so anything can happen at any time when the rest see no hope for them."

Explaining how the ICC operates, Prof Kuenyehia said complaints are received for adjudications from people of different countries. "We don't have Police or investigators to effect arrest so we rely on civil society, and citizens to issue out bench warrants for arrests."

She said in Charles Taylor's case it was the people of Sierra Leone who brought the case to the ICC to book a court room for trial because they felt trying him in Sierra Leone would trigger off apprehension.

Prof. Kuenyehia debunked the idea that the ICC was purposely set up to try African leaders. "It is not just about Africans. We make complaints to the Court more than any other continent so what do you expect? As I'm talking to you now, Col. Muammar Gaddafi is a wanted person by ICC by his own people's complaint," she explained.

She revealed that after the tragic Iraqi War, complaints on Tony Blair and George W. Bush were brought before the ICC but the prosecutor did not find any prima facie case against them, hence the case was thrown away. She said some of the cases that could be tried before the ICC include genocide, war crimes, crime against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

Earlier, Professor Emeritus, S.O. Gyando, one time lecturer of Law at the University of Ghana and GIMPA, broke the ice to set the tone for the day's lectures. His topic was: The Civil Government and Civil Society's Interest in the Rule of Law".

He admonished Ghanaians to nurture the rule of law because it was the pivotal moral foundation for Ghana's democracy and constitutionalism. "As we all know, Ghana has muddled through a chequered history of three home-grown civilian constitutions in addition to the 1957-60 one."

He said the rule of law is predicated on the following tenets that the country should take serious: freedom, justice, probity and accountability; the principle of people's power and sovereignty; the principle of Universal Adult Suffrage; the rule of law; protection and preservation of fundamental human rights, and freedom, unity and stability for Ghana.

The event was chaired by Prof. Kwame Frimpong, the Dean of GIMPA School of Law, who incidentally was the mate of Prof. Kuenyehia at University of Ghana, Legon.

# The Telegraph

Wednesday, 5 October 2011

## Nazi war crimes cases reopened after John Demjanjuk conviction

German prosecutors have reopened hundreds of dormant investigations of former Nazi death camp guards and others who might now be charged under a new precedent set by the conviction of John Demjanjuk, it has emerged.



Given the advanced age of all of the suspects – the youngest are in their 80s – the head of the German prosecutors' office dedicated to investigating Nazi war crimes said that authorities are not even waiting until the Demjanjuk appeals process is over.

"We don't want to wait too long, so we've already begun our investigations," prosecutor Kurt Schrimm said. He added there were probably "under 1,000" possible suspects who could still be alive and prosecuted. He did not give any names.

Meanwhile, Efraim Zuroff, the Simon Wiesenthal Center's top Nazi-hunter, said he would launch a new campaign in the next two months to track down the remaining Nazi war criminals.

He said the Demjanjuk conviction has opened the door to prosecutions that he had never thought possible in the past.

"It could be a very interesting final chapter," he told The Associated Press. "This has tremendous implications even at this late date."

Demjanjuk, now 91, was deported from the US to Germany in 2009 to stand trial. He was convicted in May of 28,060 counts of accessory to murder for serving as a guard at the Sobibor death camp in Nazi-occupied Poland.

It was the first time prosecutors were able to convict someone in a Nazi-era case without direct evidence that the suspect participated in a specific killing.

In bringing Demjanjuk, a retired US autoworker, to trial, Munich prosecutors argued that if they could prove that he was a guard at a camp like Sobibor – established for the sole purpose of extermination – it was enough to convict him of accessory to murder as part of the Nazi's machinery of destruction.

After 18 months of testimony, a Munich court agreed and found Demjanjuk guilty, sentencing him to five years in prison. Demjanjuk, who denies ever having served as a guard, is currently free and living in southern Germany as he waits for his appeal to be heard.



## International Movement for a Just World

Wednesday, 5 October 2011

[http://www.just-international.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=4789:uk-rewrites-war-crimes-law-at-israels-request&catid=45:recent-articles&Itemid=123](http://www.just-international.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4789:uk-rewrites-war-crimes-law-at-israels-request&catid=45:recent-articles&Itemid=123)

### UK Rewrites War Crimes Law At Israel's Request

Written by Richard Irvine

Legal mechanisms developed after the end of the Second World War to more easily prosecute war criminals are now being taken off the books to preserve Israeli impunity from accountability.

In the aftermath of the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes an outraged international community demanded justice — a demand that resulted in the Nuremberg war crimes tribunal, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the introduction of the new legal concept of universal jurisdiction. Justice, it seemed, would be impartial and hiding places for criminals scarce.

Universal jurisdiction is a simple concept. Deriving its authority from Common Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions, it places an obligation upon all states “to respect and ensure respect” for the laws of war, effectively requiring all states to prosecute suspected war criminals regardless of where the crimes were committed.

In reality, however, universal jurisdiction has rarely been invoked. This absence of enforcement in a world replete with war crimes and crimes against humanity may seem more than a little peculiar but is easily explained. In the vast majority of states the decision to investigate and prosecute lies with the state-controlled institutions of the police and public prosecutor's office, and these unfortunately, unless they are politically sanctioned to do so, do not spend time investigating crimes committed elsewhere.

Consequently, when suspected war criminals travel abroad they travel with virtual impunity; the preparatory investigations needed to establish a case against them having simply not been done. Until mid September, however, there was one country where war criminals stood a fair chance of having their day in court.

In the UK the judicial system allowed private parties and individuals to present their own evidence of war crimes before a magistrate who could then, if he or she felt the case was strong enough, issue a warrant for the suspect's arrest. Consequently, in 2005 retired Israeli General Doron Almog only escaped arrest by skulking in his plane before being flown back to Israel, while in 2009 Kadima party leader Tzipi Livni cancelled her trip rather than face arrest. Other senior Israeli figures simply chose to stay away from Britain.

Sadly on 15 September this means of potentially achieving justice was revoked. In response to Israeli protests the UK government chose to change its laws rather than see Israelis arrested. In a move condemned by Amnesty International, the UK government amended the law on universal jurisdiction so that in future only the Director of Public Prosecutions can authorize the arrest of a suspected war criminal (“Tories make life easier for war criminals,” Liberal Conspiracy, 30 March 2011).

Contradictory grounds

Oddly, the UK government defended its decision on two contradictory grounds. The first reason it put forward is that the evidence used to secure the arrests stands little chance bringing about “a realistic prospect of conviction.”

This is disingenuous, to say the least. As Geoffrey Robertson, a UN appeals judge, states: “The change in the law has nothing to do — as the UK claims — with ensuring that cases proceed on solid evidence. No district judge would issue an arrest warrant lightly (“DPP may get veto power over arrest warrants for war crime suspects,” *The Guardian*, 22 July 2010).” Secondly, the reason for the arrest is so the suspect cannot flee while further evidence is being gathered. Indeed, this is a common way for domestic investigations to proceed.

The other equally disingenuous reason the UK gave for the change in the law is that arresting suspected war criminals may endanger the non-existent peace process.

This absurd view was advanced by UK Justice Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, who decried the previous law because it constituted a risk to “our ability to help in conflict resolution or to pursue a coherent foreign policy.”

Indeed, claiming that the previously granted arrest warrants had been politically motivated, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague declared, “We cannot have a position where Israeli politicians feel they cannot visit this country.”

However, the UK’s retreat from the implementation of universal jurisdiction is not a lone example of the power of the Israel lobby to affect states’ domestic legislation. A similar shameful episode ensued when Ariel Sharon was indicted before the Belgian courts, in that instance not just Israel but also the United States brought pressure to bear, Donald Rumsfeld going as far as to threaten to move NATO headquarters from Belgium.

Which raises the question, if enforcing international humanitarian law is a threat to peace, then why do we have it?

A more coherent view was advanced by Daniel Machover, partner at the law firm Hickman and Rose: “It is disgusting that the Foreign Office is exaggerating the impact on the peace process to get a few people who are suspects of very serious international crimes off the hook” (“Ministers move to change universal jurisdiction law,” *The Guardian*, 30 May 2010).

Skipping Holocaust dinner to vote

Nevertheless, the move to change the law was not unaccompanied by controversy, and *The Jewish Chronicle* reported that in the House of Lords the vote was tied 222 to 222 and only passed because one lord, Monroe Palmer, former president of the Liberal Democrats Friends of Israel group, put off an invitation to attend a Holocaust Education Trust dinner (“Universal jurisdiction change becomes law,” *The Jewish Chronicle*, 15 September 2011). That in itself seems odd; surely Palmer should have gone and perhaps learned that, to use the Latin phrase, “*impunitas semper ad deteriora invitat*,” impunity always leads to greater crimes.

And certainly it is also at odds with the assessment by retired South African judge Richard Goldstone that “The lack of accountability for war crimes and possible war crimes against humanity has reached a crisis point; the ongoing lack of justice is undermining any hope for a successful peace process and reinforcing an environment that fosters violence” (“Goldstone defends Gaza war crimes report,” *Ynet News*, 29 September 2009).

Sadly, however, while Ilana Stein of the Israeli foreign ministry celebrated — “We are glad that Britain has made the right choice” — it seems that the lessons of the Holocaust have still to be learned.